

CHURCH OF ST THOMAS MORE
Interior Design Team Meeting
January 4, 2012

An informal gathering was held at the home of Kathy and Tony Arciero for the purpose of meeting the artisan Stephen Hirt. In attendance were Father Mike Ratajczak, Pastor; Robert Habiger, Liturgical Consultant; Kathy and Tony Arciero; Charlene Buhlert, Mary Castle, Phil Goscienski, Sondra Parks, Chris Smith and Kathleen Quinn. Absent members were Diana and Mario Diaz, Lorraine Doering, Ann Eriksson, Pat Goscienski and Douglas Lynn.

The meeting opened at 7:15PM by Robert Habiger who introduced Stephen Hirt.

Stephen Hirt told us of his training and background. He works in glass and metal and stone. In Thailand he worked with artisans to make items for gift shops for the Louvre and the New York Metropolitan Art Museum. He has made cast glass and forged metal as well as bronze sculptures. He has had experience in Israel and Bosnia. He told us how he works with regional artists to reflect the culture of the areas. He would keep in mind our vision for our particular region when designing and making items for our sanctuary.

We asked about his design for the ambry that is shown on his website. He told us how the vessels are made secure so they cannot be tampered with but they are not stored behind a glass door.

We talked about our desire for an altar made of stone. We are required to have the "mensa", the top of the altar, made of stone. Stephen told us about seeing the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem and how he was inspired by it to create a stone altar. We will consider the history of our church and the present day and future. We spoke of Matthew 25 and the verses therein that may guide us in choosing the altar design.

Stephen Hirt had some glass samples to show us. He passed them around, told us how they were made. We asked about an entry door that is depicted on his website. While it appears to be made of colored glass it is actually made of clear molded glass and reflects light from elsewhere in the room. He explained how the cast glass is made in a mold. It can be made in any color. This type of molded glass could be incorporated in the baptismal font floor cover which may be made of bronze.

He showed us pictures of a cast glass bowl for infant baptism that is supported by bronze doves. Each dove is unique; each can be seen through the almost opaque glass. He emphasized the fact that the bowl does not have a flat bottom which would tend to minimize the design; instead it is supported and appears to float above the pillar.

He showed us illustrations of his work in progress and completed projects on his laptop computer screen. He explained how he works with various public art and liturgical groups, understanding their needs and visions.

We discussed the design of the tabernacle. It cannot be made of glass, must be secure. Father Mike told us the tabernacle should reflect the design of the altar. Robert Habiger told us of a beautiful tabernacle that cost about \$22,000. We will discuss this further.

Phil Goscienski raised the question of where Renzo Zecchetto is in his plans. Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 10. The time has come for us to concentrate on various details, for example the travertine floor and walls and we must choose the color for the pews. For now the palette is neutral; where to insert colors? Robert Habiger remarked that he is concerned about how we deploy seasonal liturgical colors. He would like to see floor to ceiling banners but that requires a method whereby the banners can be installed and easily replaced. Phil Goscienski asked us to decide what major tasks should be addressed now. Robert Habiger told us we must select the materials and artisans; what we are doing tonight is the first step. Next we look at the color of stone for the altar and ambo. We will interview more artisans who must be invited to meet with us and we must be prepared to pay their expenses when they come for interviews.

Phil Goscienski reminded us that we have two more meetings in January and two in February. In addition we will meet on the second and fourth Tuesdays in March and April.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Quinn